followed the strategy of direct intervention. A number of anti-poverty programmes are being implemented. Some of the major schemes and programmes in this regard are: National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) of the Ministry of Rural Development, which guarantees at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every rural household, Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) provides self employment to the rural poor who are organized into Self Help Groups (SGHs) and are provided income generating assets through a mix of bank credit and subsidy. Under Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) the shelterless rural BPL households are provided financial assistance for construction of houses. National Social Assurance programme (NSAP) provides social security in the form of IGNOAPS (Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme), pension scheme for widows and disabled etc., Aam Admi Bima Yojana and a Health Insurance Scheme for the unorganized sector workers are the other measures taken by the government to alleviate poverty. Similarly the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation is implementing Swarna Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) which aims to encourage urban self-employment through subsidy and loan with a component of skill development training, Rajiv Awas Yojana aims to make the country slum-free. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs Food and Public Distribution is implementing Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), which provides foodgrains at subsidized rates to the poor, the Antodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) provides foodgrains to the poorest of the poor families at a highly subsidized rates.

Method adopted for poverty assessment

†826. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many of the State Governments have disagreed to the method adopted by the Centre to assess the level of poverty;

(b) whether the Planning Commission has itself set the parameters to assess the level of poverty;

(c) whether the existing parameters have become outdated;

(d) whether State Governments would be taken into confidence while setting new parameters; and

(e) whether the global scenario would also be kept into consideration while setting these new parameters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission has been estimating the level of poverty in the country using the methodology suggested by the Expert Group on Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor, since 1997. On an average, consumer expenditure of Rs. 49.9 per capita per month is associated with a calorie intake of 2400 per day in rural areas and Rs. 56.64 per capita per month with a calorie intake

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

of 2100 per day in urban areas at 1973-74 prices. The poverty line has been updated for the subsequent years using the Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers (CPIAL) for rural areas and Consumer Price Index for Urban Poverty line. The latest poverty estimates using the above methodology have been released for the year 2004-05. The State Governments have not disagreed with the methodology of estimation of poverty as such, however, some State Governments have been requesting to allow them to have more number of households in the BPL list.

(c) to (e) The methodology for estimation of poverty is reviewed from time to time. Planning Commission has constituted an Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Prof. Suresh D. Tendulkar to look at the methodology related issues including alternative conceptualization of poverty and to recommend any changes in the existing procedures of official estimates of poverty.

Saxena Committee Report

†827. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Saxena Committee appointed by the Ministers of Rural Development has suggested that a comprehensive reform is necessary in the procedure adopted by the Planning Commission for assessing the number of the poor in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is always a difference found between the assessment made by the Planning Commission and the assessment of the survey conducted by the Ministry of Rural Development; and

(d) if so, the details of this difference?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) Ministry of Rural Development appointed an Expert Group (headed by Dr. N.C. Saxena) to advise the Ministry on the methodology for conducting the BPL Census for the Eleventh Five Year Plan in order to identify the BPL households living in the rural areas who could be assisted under its various poverty alleviation programmes. The matter of fixing percentage and number of people below poverty line is beyond the terms of reference of this Expert Group, which is handled by a separate Expert Group (headed by Prof. Suresh D. Tendulkar) constituted by Planning Commission. The Expert Group (headed by Dr. N.C. Saxena) have, however, expressed their views in Para 2.3 of the Report that the percentage of people entitled to BPL status should be drastically revised upwards to at least 50%.

(c) and (d) Estimation of poverty is done by the Planning Commission at the national and state level from the large sample survey on household consumer expenditure conducted by the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.